

Testimony of Daniel McInerney
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union No.488
Before the General Law Committee
On Raised Bill No.6337: An Act Clarifying the Scope of Solar Electricity Work.
Thursday February 24, 2011

Senator Doyle, Representative Taborsak and members of the General Law Committee, my name is Daniel McInerney a member of IBEW local Union 488. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to Raised Bill No. 6337, An Act Clarifying the Scope of Solar Electricity Work.

The IBEW has over 7,000 members in the State of Connecticut; my Local Union covers Fairfield County, Litchfield County and portions of New Haven and Hartford Counties. There are approximately 5,000 licensed electrical unlimited contractors E-1 and 6,000 licensed electrical unlimited journeypersons E-2. These 11,000 plus contractors and journeypersons are fully qualified to install solar electric systems for residential, commercial or industrial applications.

To my knowledge there are less than one hundred Limited Solar Electric Contractors (PV-1) and Solar Electric Journeypersons (PV-2). This License is limited to solar work to a point immediately inside a structure or adjacent to an end use. This is for good reason, a solar journeyperson's apprenticeship program requires only 288 hours of classroom instruction and 4000 hours of On the Job Training while an unlimited electrical journeyperson's apprenticeship program requires 720 hours of classroom instruction and 8000 hours of On the Job Training.

Proponents of this raised bill would have you believe that connection of a solar electrical system into the main electrical distribution system is a simple single circuit into an electrical panel as would be the case in small residential system. In large commercial or industrial type systems a single circuit into an electrical panel is not the case; it requires much more knowledge of the electrical codes and standards as well as building codes and standards. This work requires the need for licensed unlimited electrical contractors and journeypersons (E-1's, E-2's).

The need and push for green renewable energy sources is opening doors to new technology and job creation. We should not lose sight of the need for safe and reliable installations of those new systems. Systems that should be installed and maintained by the most highly trained and licensed individuals in the industry.

Sincerely,

Daniel McInerney

IBEW Local 488